



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Kansas City District

Rathbun Lake (South Fork) Wetlands Habitat Restoration

Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act, 1986
Local Sponsor: Iowa Department of Natural Resources



Location & Description: Rathbun Lake is located on the Chariton River at river mile 142.3, approximately seven miles northwest of Centerville, Iowa, and 85 miles southeast of Des Moines, Iowa. The Restoration project is located on the South Fork Chariton River within the upper portion of the flood control pool of Rathbun Lake. When the wetland project is complete, it will consist of approximately 40-60 acres of seasonal wetland during the spring/summer, 85 acres of wildlife food plots, and 75 acres of oxbow/riparian habitat. This wetland project would comprise a total of 200 acres when the entire area is flooded to provide habitat for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds.

Problem & Need: Emergent Wetlands in this part of Iowa are rare due to past activities that drained the majority of these wetlands. During the winter and spring, water would be released from the impoundment to provide mud flats, which are an important food source for spring migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. The wetland area would be operated, as needed, in series with the Iowa Department of Natural Resource's (IDNR) Coffee Marsh wetland located to the east. Water control structures would allow greater control of the seasonal water regime in this wetland and in Coffee Marsh, greatly enhancing effective habitat management. This project is part of a larger restoration and resource protection strategy being undertaken by IDNR and the Corps of Engineers at Rathbun Lake and their associated environs.

Proposed Activities for FY07: Construction on restoration features will continue in FY07 and FY08. Features include wetland restoration, riparian and lake shoreline habitat restoration for fisheries.

Issues and Other Information: The sponsor, IDNR, stated "wetland restoration and development" are high priorities for the state. This project is an essential part of the IDNR plan for comprehensive habitat restoration and wildlife management in the upper reaches of Rathbun Lake. This project will also contribute to improvement of the overall water quality of Rathbun Lake by capturing sediments prior to entering the Lake. The wetland will also act as a filter for non-point source pollution and agricultural chemicals that may be contained in runoff from the watershed.

